

Notes: Meetings with Jake Arnold regarding NNMC

OSA SID staff present: Hamish Thomson, Guadalupe Jaramillo

Date: November 25, 2015

At the beginning of the meeting, Mr. Arnold provided information about his background. We learned that he is a former Public Information Officer for the Rio Arriba Sheriff's Department. He also informed us that he has worked with a number of people from El Rito and Northern New Mexico College (NNMC).

We learned that the NNMC Board of Regents did not follow a recommendation by Mr. Arnold from 2010. One member of the Board of Regents (BOR) must be an El Rito community member. Donald Martinez Jr. is a former Board of Regents member that resigned this past March (2015). Currently there are four members on the Board of Regents and there should be five. One member is from Las Cruces, another from Albuquerque, and two from Española (one is a student regent).

One of the member is Kevin Powers. Mr. Arnold provided the following information about Mr. Powers:

- He is a member of the Albuquerque Republican Caucus and Legislation
- He used to be a bond advisor for RBC Capital Markets
- Institutional Projects Management (IPM) was in charge of the initial dorm project (2009) for NNMC; IPM is a Chicago based company that sued NNMC and settled out of court
- Mr. Powers then retired from RBC and was appointed by Governor Martinez to the Board of Regents at NNMC (Mr. Arnold stated that Mr. Powers may still have a relationship with RBC)

Mr. Arnold informed us that former Board of Regents members Alfred Herrera (who suggested RBC) and Michael Branch had not been re-appointed at the end of their term. Mr. Branch had suggested Monument, LLC to perform the market study and manage everything related to the building of the dorm. We were informed that the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) did a study on RBC. He went on to inform us of the current Board of Regents member. Those members are Damian Martinez, Rosario "Chayo" Garcia, Donald Martinez, Kevin Powers, and Donald Martinez Jr. Donald Martinez Jr. is the only member of those five that was not re-appointed.

Accordingly, Donald Martinez Jr. had been having e-mail communication with El Rito community members. Chayo Garcia learned of this and confronted him about the e-mails outside of a meeting. Donald Martinez was re-appointed by Governor Martinez. Currently, the BOR is operating with four members instead of five.

El Rito is NNMC's legal seed yet it has no services, no security, and the gates are locked. NNMC is trying to offer Master's and PHD degrees to students. The El Rito campus works in connection with Mesa Vista High School. The campus helped local students as well as boarding students. Michael Branch is a former boarding student that attended NNMC. He received an Aides Grade degree from New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU).

We were informed that the Sociedad Venceslao Jaramillo was formed this past spring (2015). The re-appointment period for Donald Martinez and Michael Branch was held off for a year. The BOR claimed they didn't get the names of the appointees in time from Governor Martinez.

Currently, NNMC is facing four Whistleblower lawsuits from former employees. Two of those lawsuits are being handled by Mark Komer, Partner at Long, Komer & Associates. The other two lawsuits are being handled by Mark Basham, Peter Dwyer, and Dennis Romero from Basham & Basham PC. Both law firms are based in Santa Fe. Monument LLC also has a lawsuit against NNMC and is being represented by Jason Bowles of Bowles Law Firm in Albuquerque. According to Mr. Arnold, the New Mexico State Investment Council did not approve the dorm project. The Higher Education Department (HED) also did not approve. Bowles requested a mediation and this upset NNMC. We were informed that Basham & Basham is the attorney for NNMC in the lawsuit with Monument LLC.

On Monday September 21, 2015, the BOR members had a special meeting at Buffalo Thunder. It was an "Executive Meeting" in which Chayo Garcia was not present. The following is a list of those that were present during this meeting:

- Damian Martinez, a Las Cruces attorney and VP of NNMC BOR
- Tony Ortiz and Geno Zamora, attorneys representing NNMC
- Mark Basham, Peter Dwyer, and Dennis Romero from Basham & Basham PC
- Nancy Barceló, NNMC President
- Bernie Padilla
- Brandi Cordova, Administrative Secretary of Bernie Padilla

During our meeting we were informed that Bernie Padilla has worked for a few state agencies including the Department of Transportation, the Public Education Department, and the Public Regulation Commission. Accordingly, he was kicked out for sexual harassment charges filed against him. Domingo Sanchez also worked with Bernie Padilla and was fired for lying. Jake Arnold claims that there is political connection between all these people.

One lawsuit against NNMC is related to Angelo Jacquez. Jacquez has filed a Whistleblower lawsuit against NNMC. He is the former IT Director of NNMC who found pornography in one of the computers in the Automotive Department. The computer was taken to the Española Police Department and handed and was in possession of Salomon Romero. The computer was then taken by Eric Garcia a former State Police officer. Bernie Padilla and Ricky Serna were both named in the lawsuits. Jacquez is being represented by Richard Rosenstock, Daniel Yohalem and Katherine Murry.

Ricky Serna is a former student regent for New Mexico Highlands University. He has a personal relationship with Monique Romero who works for Domingo Sanchez. Recently, dated unknown, there was a verbal altercation between Ricky Serna and Angelo Jacques when they saw each other at El Paragua Restaurant in Española. The police department was contacted and the witness (Monique Romero) was not identified and no action was taken. A week later Ricky Serna filed a restraining order against Angelo Jacques. This restraining order was filed through Ricky Serna's attorney Basham & Basham. Richard Rosenstock and Daniel Yohalem ordered the deposition of Ricky Serna and Monique Romero but they did not want to cooperate. Basham decided to dismiss the case.

A case alleging the Digital Millennium Act was filed against NNNMC Study Group which is a blog set up to provide the public with information about NNMC. The claim was that NNMC Study Group was using the trademark/copyright of NNMC pictures/information. The website was eventually shut down temporarily. Afterwards, Jake Arnold typed up a legal brief for Annette Rodriguez, the web host, and submitted it Weebly. Jake Arnold claims that others want the abolishment of NNMC. He also claimed that people want the college to be run by New Mexico State University. He said "There is no saving for the college". We learned that Ricky Serna is the President of the Española Chamber of Commerce. Barney Trujillo has ties to Ricky Serna.

The following pertain to issues Jake Arnold believes are in the interest of the OSA:

- Restaurant incident between Angelo Jacques and Ricky Serna:
 - Monique Romero, Ricky Serna's sentimental partner, should be deposed since she has material information regarding Domingo Sanchez.
 - Ricky Serna, Monique Romero, and Gwen (Orona?) wrote statements regarding the restaurant incident on a college computer, during work time, involving an incident that did not involve the college.
- Service agreements between NNMC and BlueSky Builders
 - BlueSky Builders had service agreements with the college but there are conflicts of interest.
 - Ryan Cordova, NNMC basketball coach, is a partial owner of the company.
 - Brandi Cordova, Ryan Cordova's wife, had been signing payments to the company.
- Jerome Williams' complaint to HED concerning the theft of items in the bookstore
 - Domingo Sanchez and Ryan Cordova appear in the surveillance video (date unknown) taking merchandise without payment for those items.
 - Jerome Williams (former bookstore) went to the security chief and received a copy of the video; he did not go to the police department but instead went to HED. He was later told by Ricky Serna to drop the accusations but did not agree. Ryan Cordova then paid for items using a credit card.

- Afterwards, Jerome Williams was accused of stealing a computer from the Fine Arts Department; the computer appeared later. NNMC Security Director was told to file a police report by Bernie Padilla.
- We learned that Jerome Williams has his own lawyer (name unknown); he claimed that the video is with the Lieutenant Governor and HED. We were also informed that Jerome had previously applied for the Board of Regents.
- Samuel Ledeux case
 - Samuel Ledeux is the former vice president of the student senate at NNMC that has Asperger Syndrome. He also applied for the Board of Regents at NNMC and recommended who the Student Regent should be, in this case he recommended Adriana (last name unknown).
 - Adriana was then manipulated against Samuel Ledeux and was taken to the police department by Patricia Trujillo and Ana Espinoza. She was told to say that she was being stalked but she was unable to identify a stalker and the police were not able to do anything.
 - Samuel Ledeux, who visited as an alumni student, was banned from the campus. We were informed that there has been a history of animosity with Patricia Trujillo who was appointed as the Title IX Director.
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Date: November 30, 2015

The purpose of this meeting was to collect more documentation from Jake Arnold. We learned that Jessica Madrid is the former Human Resources Director of Rio Arriba County. Jake Arnold is a former Public Information Officer for the Rio Arriba County Sheriff's Department. An article related to the suspension of Rio Arriba County Manager, Tomas Campos, for one week effective December 1, 2015.